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| 学位論文の要旨 | |
| Abstract of Thesis | |
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| Rural land use and livelihood transition under the pressure of peri-urbanization in Vietnam ベトナムの都市化に伴う農村の土地利用と生業の転換 | |
| 学位論文の要旨 Abstract of Thesis | |
| <p>In Vietnam, the matter land use policy has attracted debate for many years. A recent focus of this argument was on the conflict of rural livelihoods, on the one hand, and peri-urbanization, on the other hand, as competing land uses. With two-thirds of the population still living in rural areas and 40 percent of the labor force working in agriculture, farmland has been widely considered as a necessary resource to people's livelihoods. Meanwhile, the fast-growing economy and the increasing effect of globalization have pushed up demand for urban and industrial land. In this competition, the Vietnamese government plays a major role in facilitating land conversion for urbanization and industrialization by using its absolute power to carry out land acquisition, especially in peri-urban areas. Meanwhile, rural residents, who are experiencing rapid livelihood transitions with a growing connection to the urban sector, strive to adapt and prosper under the influence of continuous socio-economic and policy changes. In addition, land developers and local cadres often participate as special interest groups, taking advantage of governance weaknesses and decentralization. Moreover, a long and twisty history of economic and political reforms, which contains numerous regional differences, adds to the complicatedness of the context in which the debate in question takes place.</p> <p>This dissertation aims to clarify the reality of this sophisticated discourse using case studies on the fringe of the two largest cities in Vietnam, where extensive farmland conversions have taken place lately. Following a qualitative approach, two case studies in this dissertation revealed the effects of urbanization and land acquisition policy on rural livelihoods in northern and southern Vietnam, and local people's strategies in coping with pressure on farmland resource. Making sense of local people's behaviors requires examining the evolvement of their livelihoods over time, and through socio-economic and policy changes. In addition, the dissertation also discussed some issues in the implementation of land conversion for urbanization and industrialization at local level, illustrated by examples of local government's behaviors in two different policy contexts. The findings were combined to provide implications for better policies related to peri-urbanization and land acquisition.</p> <p>The first case study examines the effect of farmland acquisition for urbanization in peri-urban Hanoi, northern Vietnam on local people's livelihoods. While previous studies have often criticized this policy for pushing farmers out of farming and disrupting peri-urban endogenous development, this case study shows how such claim is misleading using livelihood data of households in the peri-urban commune of Dong Mai in western Hanoi. It found that livelihood transitions in this commune took place early on, and this helped most local laborers prepare in order</p> | |

to leave farming when urbanization sped up and land acquisition policies were implemented. As a result, they were able to adapt to farmland loss without experiencing major difficulties and were able to transform their livelihoods for the better. This early transition was popular in the peri-urban context of northern Vietnam, where the inherent lack of employment and income from farming and the favorable location induced local laborers to go beyond the villages in pursuit of new opportunities. They actively took advantage of the changes around them to find new means of livelihood in order to earn higher incomes. Besides proposing a new look on peri-urban livelihoods, this case study calls for improvements in the compensation scheme and urban planning processes to make urbanization and land acquisition policies work for people on the fringes of cities in northern Vietnam.

The second case study focuses on the fringe of Ho Chi Minh City, southern Vietnam, where numerous farmers have been experiencing rapid transformations in their livelihood and land use practices. Peri-urbanization is progressing rapidly, along with the risk of conversion of large amounts of farmland into non-agricultural land. Additionally, an increasing number of laborers are moving away from both agriculture and rural areas. Investigating the landholding behaviors of farmers in the transitional commune of Thanh Loi on the fringe of Ho Chi Minh City, this case study demonstrated that farmers delayed land transfers to their successors, adopted more flexible crop choices, and diversified their livelihoods in order to deal with the lower access to land and the outflow of labor from farming. The combination of these strategies helped local farmers significantly in maintaining adequate levels of income and their landholdings, which enabled them to benefit from the rising land prices. These findings show how peri-urban farmers in southern Vietnam, behaving as economic entities, have actively interacted with the ongoing transition on the fringe to improve their own wellbeing rather than passively suffering from its impacts.

In discussing the implementation of land conversion for urbanization and industrialization at local level, the dissertation examined the behaviors of local governments using data from two cases under two different sets of regulation (i.e., Land Law 1993 and Land Law 2003). The first case illustrated the situation under Land Law 1993, in which land acquisition could only be used in projects serving national defense purpose and required the approval of the state. In this case, local cadres at communal level played the role of intermediaries between investors and farmers (landholders), supporting communication and facilitating the transfers of land. However, information asymmetry arose in communication, leading to complications and confusions in the terms of land transfer. As a result, shortly after giving the land to investors, the land-lost farmers protested and demanded extra compensations. The second case analyzed the practice of urban planning and land acquisition under Land Law 2003, in which the scope for land acquisition was expanded to incorporate projects serving public interests and economic development purposes. The definition of such projects was loose, including a wide range of categories such as public infrastructure, commercial centers, industrial zones, and residential areas. At the same time, the power to approve land acquisition was partly decentralized to provincial and district-level governments. Consequently, the appraisal of investment projects was often flawed. The second case described how such a situation led to the discontinuing of an industrial project that left a large area of acquired farmland abandoned for over a decade. The two cases reveal how weaknesses in planning and governance benefit opportunistic local cadres and land developers.

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter I provides an introduction into the debate over rural livelihoods and peri-urbanization in Vietnam. As usual, this introduction defines terminology, addresses the research problems, lays out research objectives and explains methodology. In addition, it helps set out the complicated socio-economic and political context of peri-urban Vietnam, in which the debate in question takes place. Chapter II provides a detailed description of how Vietnamese land policy evolved over time. Besides describing the land regulation system nowadays that directly governs the situation in question, this chapter also outlines important historical developments of Vietnamese land regime that left their consequences on the current context. Chapter III reviews the current literature on Vietnamese land policy and rural livelihood transition. This chapter summarizes key academic understandings in various topics related to the research problem at hand such as

land reforms and tenure security, rural livelihood transition in developing countries and peri-urbanization. Chapter IV presents a case study on the fringe of Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, to illustrate an alternative image of peri-urban livelihoods with quite early livelihood transition, which contrasts to the conventional idea of a rural landscape dominant by farming. Chapter V demonstrates a case study in a transitional commune on the western fringe of Ho Chi Minh City, southern Vietnam, where peri-urban farmers used various strategies (i.e., delaying land transfers to children, choosing flexible crop choices, and prolonging landholding to benefit from the rising land prices) to adapt to the ongoing transition in order to improve their own wellbeing. Chapter VI discusses the implementation of land conversion for urbanization and industrialization at local level with examples of local government's behaviors under two different sets of regulation (i.e., Land Law 1993 and Land Law 2003). The findings show various weaknesses in the planning and governing of peri-urbanization, which benefit opportunistic local cadres and land developers. Chapter VII draws out key conclusions for the dissertation and discusses the policy implications toward better urban planning and land acquisition.

In summary, the dissertation shows an alternative image of rural livelihoods on the fringe of cities and illustrates how farmers, being quite rational and active, responded to the pressure from peri-urbanization on the farmland resource. With the clarification of the impact of this process on local people's livelihoods and the analysis of how governance weaknesses made way for opportunistic behaviors of local cadres and land developers, the dissertation calls for improvements in current regulations toward better urban planning and a fairer compensation scheme in implementing land acquisition policy.